

CONFIDENTIAL

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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

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SUBJECT Communist Strength Endangered by Public
Criticism of Country's Foreign Policy

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SUPPLEMENT

ORIGIN

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1. During the past five weeks the Czechoslovak public has been showing a greatly increased interest in the country's foreign policy. There have been numerous speeches in various parts of Bohemia and Moravia criticizing the policy for its vagueness and timidity, and accusing it of stating Czechoslovakia's territorial claims so weakly that it could get neither attention nor respect from the major powers. There have even been demands that an official explanation be given for the Government's easy surrender of the Carpatho-Ukraine to Russia during the summer of 1945.
2. If this public interest in the country's foreign policy increases, it may cause considerable embarrassment to the Czechoslovak Communist Party, which will be shown up as lacking a strong nationalistic territorial attitude and as subscribing too easily to Russia's wishes. The non-Communist parties are already detecting in this one of the major weaknesses in the Communist Party's strength. One non-Communist group is now preparing a public report giving the statements made by all members of the Constitutional Assembly with regard to Czechoslovakia's claims to the Polish-held areas around Glatz and Ratibor; it is believed that this report will reveal that no Communist member of the Assembly has made a single statement on behalf of Czechoslovakia's territorial claims.

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Comment: According to previous reports, Dr. Ivo Duchacek, chair man of the Foreign Affairs Committee, attempted in late November to force the Government to announce its policy on Czechoslovak claims to Glatz. Deputy Prime Minister Fierlinger, then acting Foreign Minister succeeded, however, in avoiding any official statement, realizing that the Government was caught between Russia's recent declarations regarding the Polish frontier and a popular sentiment in Czechoslovakia backing that country's claims to certain border areas. Foreign Minister Masaryk, wiring from America, requested strongly that all discussions be dropped. Due to pressure from the "unofficial Glatz liberation committee", the subject again popped up during the December discussion of the budget, at which time it appeared that the Government would withdraw a circular letter to the Big Four stating its territorial demands against Poland. When Duchacek brought the subject up a third time, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs accused him of "toying dangerously with the Soviets", and ordered his statements deleted from the Czechoslovak press.

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